



National Commission on the Future of the Army

2530 Crystal Drive, Zachary Taylor Building, Suite 5000
Arlington, VA 22202

SUBJECT: Operational Subcommittee for the National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA) 16 SEP 15 Meeting Minutes

Date: 16 September 2015

Time: 0800 – 1155 hours

Location: Taylor Building, Arlington, VA

Attendees:

HON Dr. Kathleen Hicks – Commissioner, Operational Subcommittee Chairperson

GEN (Ret) Carter Ham – Commissioner

LTG (R) Jack Stultz – Commissioner

SMA (R) Raymond Chandler – Commissioner

MAJ Vinson Morris – Subcommittee Designated Federal Officer (DFO)

Mr. Kerry Schindler – NCFA Staff Lead

Mr. Scott Sharp – NCFA Staff

Mr. Jason Southerland – NCFA Staff

MAJ Benjamin Fernandes – NCFA Staff

Documents Submitted to Commission: Operational Subcommittee Staff IPR Brief, 16 September 2015

Meeting Summary

The Operational Subcommittee conducted a meeting to discuss the path forward and confirm actions completed to date by the Subcommittee. The meeting started at 0800 hours with the DFO explaining the application of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) to the proceedings. The meeting followed the agenda provided by the NCFA staff supporting the Subcommittee.

The NCFA staff updated the group on engagements conducted over the previous month with the Defense Attachés for Australia, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, France and Poland. The Subcommittee continues to meet with allied and partner nations to capture their perspectives as the United States balances the size and mix of the Army. Engaging key allies and partners to understand their perspectives in balancing national security risk in light of declining defense resources is an important element of the Commission's deliberative effort.

The Subcommittee also discussed future engagements planned with Defense Attachés for Mexico, Israel, Colombia and Germany. Minutes from all multinational engagements are published on the NCFA public website (www.ncfa.ncr.gov).

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The Subcommittee discussed overarching themes expressed by partners and Allies during numerous Defense Attaché engagements. These themes included a need for U.S. support in four key areas: air defense, logistics at echelons above brigade, aviation, and exercises. Partners also indicated strong support for forward presence of U.S. forces.

Next, the Subcommittee reviewed previous site visits to California, Minnesota, Colorado, Pennsylvania, New York and Tennessee (National Guard Association of the United States conference). These site visits included engagements with Regular Army, Army National Guard, and US Army Reserve units from multiple functional areas (maneuver, mission command, fires, engineers, cyber, and aviation) and institutional elements (aviation training and homeland defense). Minutes from these site visits are published on the NCFA public website (www.ncfa.ncr.gov). Feedback and information gathering during these visits provided consistent trends: (1) Reserve Component units seek more employment along predictable timelines, (2) the need for a total force approach for doing what's best for the Nation concerning the size and mix of the Army, and (3) the challenges of budget reductions and uncertainty are adversely impacting the force.

The Operational Subcommittee next discussed progress on the proposed future operational environment staff paper. The paper's intent is to explain the Subcommittee's view on the current and future environments where Army forces must operate. The draft paper covers both regional (e.g. Europe) and functional issues (e.g. Cyber). The Subcommittee views this paper as a key contribution to underpin the Commission's recommendations in the final report.

The future operational environment paper discussion led to the next topic, a proposed paper on Army missions for the future. Commissioners considered most likely missions and tasks for Army forces. Additionally, there was some discussion on whether any tasks or missions would remain for Army forces. Conclusion was that the Army might not have the capacity to conduct a given mission or task, but no specific type of task or mission was likely to be removed for the Army's list of future actions. This led to a discussion on potential risks related to the Army not having sufficient capacity or a specific capability.

The Subcommittee then turned to force mix analysis effort and preparations for the October 2015 Comprehensive Analytic Review (CAR). Extensive classified modeling efforts were underway and the question arose as to whether the Subcommittee must review the analytical results as a group before presenting the results to the full Commission. The Subcommittee decided all Commissioners should have an opportunity to ask for excursions or specific analysis before and during the CAR. The Subcommittee Chair directed the NCFA Staff to present the status of modeling efforts and ask for additional excursions guidance during the Commission's Closed Meeting later that day. This would allow all Commissioners to seek adjustments from the base line parameters for modeling approved during the August 2015 Closed Meeting and view the results during the CAR.

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The Subcommittee discussed a working list of force size and shaping questions, including classified questions, the Commissioners should address during the CAR. These questions would be revised later in the day during the Commission's closed meeting based on revisions from Commissioners outside the Operational Subcommittee.

The meeting adjourned at 1155 hours.